

Message Text

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ORIGIN EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 CCO-00 RSC-01 SS-15 SSO-00 ISO-00 NEA-06

NSCE-00 NSC-05 INR-05 EB-04 SP-02 INRE-00 /051 R

DRAFTED BY EUR/WE:HGMOEN:JKB

APPROVED BY EUR - JGLOWENSTEIN

EUR/WE - WHMARSH

S/S - MR. GAMMON

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O R 020054Z NOV 74 ZFF4

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY ROME

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 241260

TOSEC 531, ZDF TEHERAN ONLY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IT

SUBJECT: STATUS OF ITALIAN GOVERNMENT FORMATION

BRUSSELS FOR HARTMAN

1. AFTER MORE THAN TWO WEEKS OF EXHAUSTIVE EFFORT, FORMER PRIME MINISTER AMINTORE FANFANI GAVE UP ON OCTOBER 25 IN HIS ATTEMPTS TO PUT TOGETHER A NEW ITALIAN GOVERNMENT. PRESIDENT LEONE HAS NOW APPOINTED FOREIGN MINISTER ALDO MORO AS THE NEW FORMATEUR. THE PACE OF MORO'S CONSULTATIONS SUGGESTS THAT THESE RITUAL DISCUSSIONS WITH ITALIAN POLITICAL LEADERS MAY TAKE AT LEAST TWO WEEKS TO COMPLETE. IN THE ABSENCE OF THE UNEXPECTED, THEREFORE, YOU WILL BE MEETING ON NOVEMBER 5 WITH MEMBERS OF THE RUMOR CARETAKER GOVERNMENT INCLUDING MORO, WHO WILL BE BOTH FOREIGN MINISTER AND FORMATEUR.

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2. MORO, A THREE-TIME PRIME MINISTER, IS A PRINCIPAL

LEADER OF THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRAT (DC) LEFT WING. HIS APPOINTMENT HAS GENERALLY BEEN INTERPRETED AS EVIDENCE OF CONTINUING DC ADHERENCE TO THE CENTER-LEFT FORMULA, WHOSE FOUNDATION IS THE DC-SOCIALIST ALLIANCE.

3. THERE APPEARS TO BE NO EASY SOLUTION TO THE PRESENT CABINET CRISIS WHICH IS EXACERBATED BY THE SEVERE ITALIAN ECONOMIC PROBLEMS. FANFANT'S FAILURE, WHILE DUE IN PART

TO AN ABSENCE OF AGREEMENT AMONG THE PARTIES ON HOW TO DEAL WITH THESE PROBLEMS, ALSO RESULTED FROM THE DIFFICULTY OF ACCOMMODATING THE DESIDERATA OF THE SMALL BUT KEY SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY WITHIN THE COALITION. NOTWITHSTANDING THESE DIFFICULTIES, HOWEVER, MOST OBSERVERS REMAIN CONVINCED THAT THERE IS NO ALTERNATIVE TO THE CENTER-LEFT ORIENTATION AS A VIABLE DEMOCRATIC POLITICAL COMBINATION IN ITALY. INGERSOLL

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CENTRAL GOVERNMENT, POLITICAL SITUATION, POLITICAL LEADERS, TOSEC 531
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 02 NOV 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974STATE241260
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: HGMOEN:JKB
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740314-0072
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741176/aaaacmvg.tel
Line Count: 78
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03 APR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <03 APR 2002 by martinml>; APPROVED <07-Aug-2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: STATUS OF ITALIAN GOVERNMENT FORMATION BRUSSELS FOR HARTMAN
TAGS: PFOR, IT
To: BUCHAREST TEHRAN
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005